{ See Note at end. }

UNITY

CHURCH-DOOR PULPIT,

FOR

FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION.

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The Jesus of History and the Jesus of Romance.

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Unlike Arethusa and Alpheus, the two streams of Greek mythology that, under the spell of love, are doomed to seek and flee each other without ever, in their long chase, mingling in tender embrace their waters, lengend and history flow through the tracts of time locked in each other's arms. They cross, they combine, they are interlaced. Where the one appears, the other is also present. This intimate conjugal union is natural. History is prosy. It is a bony skeleton of hard dry facts. Its movements are across dreary wastes of endless repetitions; its marches skirt ruins and graves; and its mile posts are written in blood, its guideboards bear legends of murders. Even when the angel of Peace prevails for a period upon the grim brother, War, to sheathe the sword and quench the torch, the measured pulsations of the heart of that large body named humanity present a dreary if normal sameness of curves, and the numbered respirations a monotony of steadiness extremely wearisome. Abnormal increase or decrease of the functional workings, paroxysms and spasms of disease and pressure break, it is true, the even chain of linked iterations; but upon closer inspection and when followed across larger spans of years, they too appear to obey a law of periodical recurrence absolutely crushing in its Draconic severity. In the larger outlook from towering promontories, the tidal flow and ebb of history cannot but appear as *impersonal*. The wills and whims of individual men seem lost in the higher and more potent pressure of a power, of a law, of a force above men and their passions, above individuals and their aims. As in the ocean's billows, the little globules of water-drops, which after all make up the rolling sweep of the mountain-waves, are swallowed by the very sheet which they help to stretch; and as in the bolder movements of the combined volume the pressure and opposition of each little sphere is overcome, so men are lost in the very humanity they are composing, and individual resistance brushed aside or gathered up in the aggregated momentum of the large weighty mass.

Legends are now the unconscious protest of that something which we call the human soul, against the prosiness of history. They are the children of poetry.

They plant flowers grown under the tropics of imagination on the very arctic glaciers of hard nude facts; and thus afford the inner eye of the human soul points of relief, stations of repose, where to rest from the painful monotony of colorless repetitions. Legends are the ivy, whose green leaflets climb the ungainly stony wall and hide under their cloak of verdure the nakedness of their support beneath. And more still, the legendary element woven into the records of the past is the outcry against the crushed and disregarded personality of man. If it does not tell what was, it announces what should have been. It is born of the assertion of man's desired and cherished individuality. If to-day the reconstructive philosophy of history is forced to own that the onward march of humanity is directed by impersonal laws of which the individuals are mere passive exponents, the constructive poetry of legends inverts the order and singles out individualities as the fountain-head of the great progressive movements. In the temple of song and fable, it erects statues of its heroes. There it worships and crowns their head with a flowery fillet plucked from the rich bower of doting self-deluding admiration. Thus, for instance, it fashions a William Tell, the incarnation of Switzerland's mountain air and Alpine love of independence and manly trust and truthfulness. Naked history fails to name him. And nowhere are these creations more highly wrought and more numerous than where the soul fathoms its own depths and listens to the whispering of the still small voice softly speaking within. The religious history of the world is to-day recognized as but a branch of the large tree of general history. It has no law of its own; its lines of upward tending are isochronous and isodynamic with those of the other functions and powers of humanity. But religion is poetry; and like all poetry it must be personal. And hence it is, that especially in the narrative of the religious longings and happenings of the race the personal element is so richly projected into legends; that for almost every system of religious thought one individuality it named as its author and witness. There they come, clad in the white garments of pure devotion, the Zarathustras and the Moses's and the Jesus's; there they stand in a greater glory than naked history will kindle, wreathed with fabled beauty and gifted with imagined powers, the Confucius's and the Mohammeds and the Buddhas. In all of them "the word became flesh and dwelled among men."

Legend and history are, therefore, not easily divorced. The natural difficulty is great, for doubtlessly every legend is the outgrowth of a fact. The drama of the skies shaped the legends of the earliest races. The tragedy of a personal life is often the germ of the ideal personal career, now credited and told of the founders and fathers of the world's religious creeds. But this also should be borne in mind: the fact behind the legend is a mere barren wire which the poetic instinct of men thrust into the chemical solution of elements originally independent of it. The process of crystallization must unavoidably have followed. It is the function, now, of the critical student to reverse this process of combination and crystallization. His acids must dissolve the salts wrapped around the wire, and show the one and the others in their true state. Were it not for the natural indolence of men, the dissolvent might have been less charily applied. But we all are more or less disinclined to fold our tents in which our minds have found for so long a shelter and, moving onward, pitch them again in a reservation we know not. Not every one is an Abraham, ready to obey the divine summons to move to the land which will be shown us. And again, religious prejudice is a very strong neutralizer of the acids. The same poetic instinct which is father to the legends or ideal personifications, acts with us as their preserver. It plays almost unbidden the part of an alkali, rendering the acid ineffectual.

It may be well, this morning, for us to remember all these difficulties, as we take up the task to separate the historical from the romantic in the records still regarded as authentic, and conceptions still treasured as true and unshaken of the life, the mission and the work of Jesus of Nazareth. Why I should propose just now and to

you this theme for calm study, I need not divulge. My reasons are plain and the study timely. No subject is more apt to mislead non-Jews into a false estimate of Judaism than this; and not only the orthodox, in whom we can pardon the shortsightedness, but also those who boast of having thrown off the thralldom of orthodoxy, in whom the obliquity of vision is less excusable, misapply their influence to repeat and replant old errors, and thus maliciously or ignorantly sow and scatter the dragon-seeds of prejudice and hatred, weeds, the juice of which will be extracted to concoct a poison, wherewith to endanger the peace of the Jew. Nor do I need reassure you as to the spirit of my investigations. The critical method is no stranger on this pulpit. But a few weeks ago we searched the possible facts of Moses's life, and thus the probable charge falls to the ground that where our religious bias is not touched we can well play with the scalpel of the dissector. Every religious sentiment is holy ground for us. We approach it with our sandals removed, even if with unveiled eye. To deny the great mission of Christianity and the beneficent results of its work in the non-Judaic world, cannot enter into my intentions. Were I to attempt this, I should not alone outrage the spirit of historical truth, but fall beneath the lofty station of our ancient Rabbis, Maimonides among others, for whom the daughter religions were messengers of divine truth to the heathens; I should fall beneath that Talmudical sage who refused to class the non-Jews, Christians, outside of the land of Palestine, among the idolaters, though they dissented from the Jews; or I should have to forget that under the name Bileam the Talmud even places Jesus among the prophets, on a level with Moses. But while we cheerfully acknowledge the good which the world reaped through Christian influences, we cannot acquiesce in the claim so often advanced that Judaism is a lower form of religious development than Christianity, that Christ stands alone —a star rising amidst central gloom, transcending if not all possibilities of human nature, yet all Judaism, and in himself concentrating the many centuries of the past and linking them unto the untold years of the future, modelling *man* for all time to come, regulating humanity's varied wants and aspirations and ambitions for all ages yet unborn. And still less can we sit by idly when these claims are advanced and the lower condition of Judaism is made out in the name of Old Testament criticism, while to prove the position assumed the arsenal of criticism is closed as soon as the New Testament narrative is touched.

The career of Jesus cannot be understood without a considerable degree of knowledge of cotemporaneous Jewish history—and this not gleaned at second hand, not even through the muddy medium of Josephus, but from the original sources. These are to Christian theologians, however, a book sealed with seven seals. In Europe, here and there, a non-Jewish scholar may be found, who can steer his craft in safety over the pathless ocean of the Talmud. But with us even representative Christian ministers are as ignorant of the Hebrew alphabet —let alone the mazes of Talmudic disquisitions—as I am of the picture-writing of the Aztecs, and the effect of this blissful ignorance is but too painfully visible. And moreover, the works of Geiger, or Zunz, or Derenbourg, or even Graetz, are unknown quantities, and in the whole range of American writings on the period in question I know of but one book—Frothingham's Cradle of the Christ — which betrays a careful use of the golden ores brought to light by our immortal scholars from the deep mine of Jewish literature. Renan's books are perhaps better known. But Renan wields the pen of the novelist when he follows the teacher of Nazareth from station to station, and not that of the scholar. The light of Old Testament criticism is breaking upon the English-speaking community, but the New Testament criticism— outside of textual and doctrinal commentaries—still lies fallow. At least, this conclusion is forced upon me by the fact that in all the many sermons which we have occasion to hear, the silent assumption is made that we have in the gospels an authentic account of Jesus's life and death. Such, however, is not the case.

German scholarship has shown that in the four gospels we have four different accounts of Jesus's life, each one colored and shaped by the party standpoint of the writer. The men whose names the gospels bear are not their authors. In my last discourse I called your attention to a similar phenomenon in the Old Testament, and as I then disproved the suspicion of even a pious fraud on the part of the real writers of Daniel, Ecclesiastes, etc., etc., so, in making the statement to-day that neither Mark, Luke, John nor Matthew wrote the evangels current under their signatures, I am far from imputing improper motives to the final compilers of these fragments. For fragments they are. This even conservative scholars own, such as Reuss (Geschichte der N. T. Literatur) who are unwilling to follow the Tübingen school, which makes Matthew the representative of the Jewish-Christian party within the church, the third Evangelist's Jesus a pronounced Paulinian, while the second occupies a middle conciliatory ground between the Petrine and Paulinian sections of young, developing Christianity. As to the fourth, it betokens at first glance its peculiar trend. It is the work of a philosopher. The *Philonic* logos doctrine is the pole star of the narrative, and his Jesus is a philosophical construction. *When* these gospels were reduced to writing, can be approximately determined. Certainly not before the second century of our era. In fact, it seems as if Jesus had made a deep, lasting impression upon only a small band of immediate disciples. High towering mountains draw the eye of thousands, and should even by a sudden cataclysm the pinnacle be entirely submerged, still name and location would be retained—and this the more vividly on account of the tragic disappearance—by many. Of Jesus, there is no trace in contemporary historians. Josephus mentions him not, for the often-quoted passage is unmistakably an interpolation. In the *Talmud* in not expurgated editions, the name occurs about twenty times, but all the historical matter may be summed up in a line which characterizes him as a magician—a line which dates long after the final close of the present New Testament canon. As an offset to this rather fanatical disparagement, we have the Talmudical identification with Bileam—as a prophet; an estimate which again is the precipitate of the written gospels. The Latin and Greek authors just mention his name, and the Ecclesiastical fathers know of him no more than a few anecdotes, and even St. Paul is but little acquainted with the details of his life. This external evidence is supplemented by internal proofs, which at least to me seem to hint that the beginning of the second century is still too early a date. In the New Testament copious quotations occur from the Old Testament. Yet, as a late work by Prof. Toy, of Harvard, shows, these quotations betoken ignorance of the Hebrew text, and their present form they could not have assumed until at a period when the Septuagint had in certain circles replaced the Masoretic version—or in other words, our gospels are, as a written work, the product of men who no longer had access to the Hebrew original. That the final compilers were in fact, totally estranged from Jewish life and Jewish institutions, is also proven by the misrepresentation of the Pharisaic sect, and the total ignorance of Jewish law in the description of the trial. The first circumstance points to times long after the destructiou of the temple if not the Hadrian rebellion, when with the extinction of national life the clear picture of the internal struggles was dismally blurred. A writer living before the destruction of the Temple, or even for a generation after, could not have made the Pharisees a band of hypocrites, and could not have made of them the sticklers for the dead law and letter which they are in the New Testament. Geiger has shown conclusively that they were nothing of the kind. As for the literalism of the Pharisees, they were the very ones that tried to yield to the claims of life; of course, true to their preconceived notion that everything was contained in the Thorah, they attempted to evolve the new institutions of religious life from the Pentateuchal text, and in this attempt often did violence to the plain readings of the Mosaic words. But it was the letter which always was wrenched from its true bearing, and not

warm active life which was forced under the yoke of the letter. Nor is the New Testament method of quoting the Bible any other than that of the Pharisees. The Midrash and the gospels breathe the same spirit and carry out the identical plan. And hypocrites the Pharisees were indeed not. The Sadducees were much rather hypocritical slaves of the letter. The former were the party of the people; they were the strong advocates of the national cause. They believed in the "world to come," not in a future state, but on this earth—in a change to come when Rome's foot should be removed from Israel's neck, and Jerusalem again be free, under the scepter of her own king, the Messiah. And Jesus himself announced no other hope. He, too, was a Pharisee. Yet of this, his Pharisaic sympathies, the gospels know nothing. A wide gulf of time separates their authors from the period they pretend to give a correct picture of. The trial scene points in the same direction. The gospels are in themselves not agreed when the trial and execution took place. But no matter which of them we follow, the account is flagrantly out of keeping with well-known principles of Jewish criminal law—a disharmony which could escape the eye of men alone no longer familiar with the details of the Jewish penal code, as theoretically taught in the schools after, or practiced before, the Roman era. Jesus's trial takes place in the night, in the private house of the High priest, on the night preceding a holiday; the execution takes place on the holiday (or as another account has it) on the day previous. He is condemned on his own confession, it is not shown that he had been warned. (*Hathraah*, etc.) The Jewish law now lays down the principle that trials must take place in the chamber appointed for the purpose in the Temple; on one's own confession, no one could be convicted; two witnesses had to testify to the truth of the charge, and it had also to be shown that the defendant had been warned. The charge here seems to be blasphemy. But from the account before us, I doubt whether the charge could be made out. Jesus says: "I am the son of God," and all lay emphasis on the word *son* as blasphemous in that connection to Jewish ears. But when we remember the frequency and the emphasis with which the prophets always assure Israel that they are sons unto the Lord their God, we can scarcely understand why a Jewish tribunal should have sentenced to death one for merely repeating a Biblical phrase. Yet, so blurred had become the account of the trial, before it reached after almost a hundred and fifty years, the last compiler, and so little acquainted was he with Jewish life that he failed to disentangle the maze. A cool judgment must detect in the narrative as even now before us, the indication that Jesus's blasphemy consisted in pronouncing the name of God before the tribunal, by its four letters! Any other explanation of the blasphemy is forced and far-fetched. Hence the High-priest tears his garments. That the trial takes place at night is another infraction of the Jewish law. Capital trials had to take place during the day time; the sentence pronounced, one night had to intervene and on the next day the Sanhedrin assembled again and had another vote, those who had previously voted guilty alone having the privilege of changing their vote. No execution could take place on a holiday or the eve of a holiday; and finally, crucifixion is not a Jewish mode of punishment.

These discrepancies and divergences from the well established rules of procedure in a Jewish tribunal have never been satisfactorily accounted for. The choice of the day of Pessach, or its eve, as the day of the execution was a theological after-thought and reconstruction. The Jew offered on that day his Paschal lamb on his family table; Jesus the Paschal offering for the world, therefore laid down his pure life on Mount Calvary on the same festal day. The account of the trial, from whatever point we may study it, cannot pass as historical, for a critical judgment cannot accede to the proposition of the Jewish historian Jost that Jesus was the victim of a conspiracy entered into by the men in high authority, who, blinded by their zeal to put Jesus out of the way violated defiantly every form of law—a proceeding which the

Roman Procurator certainly would not have so easily acquiesced in.

From a side light which falls fromJewish literature upon the struggles of the nascent church, we may even infer that the gospels were not extant in written form before the close of the second century. Certain expressions of Jewish teachers of the third century show that they were acquainted with a written gospel, and the Mishna itself assumed probably its written form only in consequence of, and as an attempted check upon, the influence of the Christian written documents,—a change from the former horror to reduce tradition to writing which cannot have been wrought previous to Juda Hannassi's time (end of second century), but rather a little later still.

Up to that time, the story of Jesus's life passed orally from mouth to mouth. Various attempts may have been made to fix it in writing, but none succeeded well enough to neutralize later oral amplifications. That in the course of such tradition, the legendary element should sprout luxuriously, is natural. A simple tale was embellished, enlarged, overlaid with miraculous stories, and finally recast in the mould of a theological purpose. To point to the general trustworthiness of Jewish tradition, which passed orally from generation to generation, without materially altering the context and verbal text, will not weaken the suspicion of later additions and overworkings in the gospels; for, let us not forget that the tradition of the Jews was a *living* power, dealing with and regulating practically every day life, and where it was not so, the schools had an interest in its legal constructions. And again, the Talmud itself shows what powerful artificial aids to memory had to be invented in order to accomplish the desired preservation. Where the Halakha, the legal element is not at stake, in the "Hagadic" parts, tradition is much less trustworthy; and the gospels are nothing more nor less than Hebrew "Hagadas." Nor is the Hebrew tradition, even in respect to its "Halakhas," so absolutely reliable as is generally supposed. In one regard, however, the composition of the Mishna may be cited as an analagon. It is constructed without plan, but on mere "mechanical"—if I may use this term—principles. So also are the gospels. They present no chronological order—a fact Reuss well recognizes; the sentences and sayings of the master being grouped together like so frequently those of the old Hebrew prophets, not with reference to their old context, but to their verbal form. *A history, a biography of Jesus, in the modern sense of the word, we have not.*

Is now the conclusion warranted that he never lived? I hold not. Such personalities as these are never invented; though as time lengthens, and the movement to which they unconsciously gave impetus spreads, new lines are drawn across their face, which hide completely its orignal cast. The Jesus of history passed into the Jesus of romance, as the church grew, and to-day both Orthodox and Liberals still cling to a Jesus of their own fashioning, though each one again different from the Jesus of the Romance of the gospels, and from him of actual history. Let us briefly attempt to reconstruct from the material of Jewish history, the probable Jesus as he lived and moved across the mountains of Galilee and through the streets of Jerusalem, for beyond a probability we can never hope to pierce the darkness which surrounds his personality.

At the very first start, we must eliminate his Davidian descent which—however, even granted the historical character of the pedigree given, involves strange difficulties—and the miracles, both as belonging to the jungles of Romance. Not to be misjudged, let me say I reject the account of his miraculous deeds, not because I am afraid that they prove his divinity. After J. Stuart Mill, miracles rather disprove than prove the divine character of their performer. The Old Testament miracles have no greater force over my convictions than those of the new. That which needs the crutches of a Miracle is less strong than Truth, who always can stand and walk without such artificial props. The miracles of the New Testament wear on their face the stamp of being recasts and copies, on an enlarged scale however, of the Old Testament wonders. Compare a few of them—

the origin becomes plain. Moses divides the Red sea—Jesus walks over the water itself. Moses strikes the rock to draw water,—Jesus changes water into wine. Moses feeds his people on manna—Jesus feeds a countless multitude of people on a few loaves of bread and a few fish. The prophet revives a dead child—Jesus performs the act twice, and so on. Without such miracles, the personality of Jesus is attractive enough. Who was he? What did he claim to be?

He was a native of Galilee. His cradle stood among a sturdy if poor race of mountaineers, who loved their homes and loved their freedom still more; who were perhaps men without learning, rough and often indistinct of speech, but in whose breasts beat a heart aglow for the cause of their down-trodden nation and bitter with the hatred of the nation's oppressors, the Romans. And just then the night of foreign oppression was at its thickest; the call for men ready to die for the nation's independence most urgent, and its echo even loudly breaking along the hills crowned by the hamlets of the Galileans. Women dreamt that they would give birth to the Messiah of the nation,—that is to say that they would become mother to their people's redeemer—not, as Christians always misconstrue, redeemer from sin or the slavery of the law, but from foreign domination! Among these people Jesus grew up, amidst the excitement of these disjointed years his character was formed. He gathered what learning he could in the village synagogue. Learned in the law he was not; the Halakha he never cultivated. But he developed into a *Hagaddist*, a preacher. And, a rare occurrence among the Galileans, his was a tongue of easy eloquence, a voice of celestial music. His was a deeply religious nature, an enthusiastic, loving soul, kindling enthusiasm by the very warmth of his own inner life. His "sermons" begin soon to catch the ears of his neighbors; his voice soon reaches the thousands; and finally he leaves the narrow field of his hilly home and appears on the plains beneath, taking there the place of another preacher, John, who a short while previous had been imprisoned by Herodias. What was the burden of his message? A new religion? No! He himself disclaims it; and the words, "I am come to fulfill the law," upon which, in this connection so much stress is laid, must be retranslated into Hebrew to be properly understood. *Lakayem*, to discharge all the duties of the law, all the *Miswoth*, he could alone have said. He did not abolish the Sabbath; "the Sabbath was made for man," etc., is a Jewish saying, and all the "represented" violations of the stricter Jewish law are all such as the Talmudic *Halakha* would countenance; danger to life always setting aside Sabbatical prohibitions of any character. Did he teach a new prayer, as is so often said, with the chaste introduction, "Our Father who art in heaven"? Ah no! that prayer, with the introduction, is a combination of Jewish prayers, not a sentiment in it foreign or repugnant to the Judaism of his day. His superstitions were even those of his age, and as *national* was he in his Judaism as any. But, perhaps he taught a new morality? No, again. The golden rule had been taught before him by *Hillel*, who in turn might have learned it from the Greek *Isokrates*. Love as the principle of intercourse in contradiction to the Old Testament hatred, Judaism needed not him to urge. For the Old Testament hatred is a fiction, and the love which Jesus taught, his own followers did not practice, unless the thousands and thousands of Jews and heretics burnt by Christianity died of the *love* borne to them by their tormentors. The contemporaneous morality of Judaism had long since outgrown the *eye for an eye* barbarism, and favors to an enemy in preference to a friend are counseled in the Talmud, but with a more natural motive than the gushing love of the New Testament. And after all, conformity to nature is the true test of the depth of a morality. The horror of the oath is shared by the Talmudists; humility praised by them, regard for the poor urged by them as strongly as by the preacher of Nazareth. He, simply like all the Hagaddists, addressed himself not to the learned classes, but to the despised "Ame Haaretz." For them, his warm heart throbbed with sympathy. His voice struck a deep chord in their hearts, and they followed him will-

ingly—him who was their friend. The number of his friends increasing, the thought grew upon him that he was the *Messiah* of his people, until it crossed his lips, and his disciples took up the sweet sound. But he was not a man of the sword. To liberate this people from the yoke of the Romans through blood and fire was according to his hopes not necessary. This state of iniquity could not endure. The God of Righteousness cannot tolerate the triumph of the wicked. His kingdom is not of this world, but this world will pass away and then the world-to-come, the new conditions of the rule of Righteousness will be established not beyond the clouds, but here on earth; and he, Jesus, will, indeed, sit "at the right hand of the Father," and judge his people. Carried away by this conviction, he enters Jerusalem. He knows the danger; but he falters not. The Romans, to whom alone as a Messiah he was dangerous, seize him and like so many before him, put him to death.

This, in brief, by the light of Jewish history, the life and work of Jesus. What has the Romance of Paulinian theology made of him? What is Unitarianism and Platitudinarianism, falsely called Liberalism, to-day making of him? The hour is too late to discuss this, and I shall defer the criticism of the Romance till next Sunday. We, taking only history as our kind and sufficient teacher, can well own that he was a star, but not a meteor flashing forth from central gloom, but a star among stars, the light of which mingles with the brilliancy of the others so much as scarcely to be distinct from it. Jesus did not transcend the Judaism of his day. His words—Jewish words were they, his thoughts—Jewish thoughts—traveled out into the world, and conquered it. Let us be glad of their triumph! But as for Judaism—the mother needed not the teachings of her own son. The universalism of the unknown Prophet of the captivity, the ever enlarging stream of its golden morality—though dammed in and dyked back by Talmudical laws, which, thank God, to-day are giving way before the pressure *from within* and *not from without*—assign to Judaism a station on the highest plane of true humanity. And for the crown of thorns Jesus in the hour of his martyrdom wore, why hundreds of thousands of the Jews died as he did for their convictions,and the last cross to which are affixed the Jews is not yet built, but in Russia and Germany and even here, among us,the hoarse cry, Crucify! crucify! still is roared by thousands who blaspheme the name of Him whom they call Master, roused against the very racial kinsmen of him who they believe died for their sins. Were he to come back to earth to-day, not with these demons of darkness, these fiends of fanaticism would he dwell. Not with the persecutors but with the persecuted, and his religion would and could be none else than our own Reformed Judaism—his morality none else than that of Humanity, grown and growing beyond his own time.

Our "Church-Door Pulpit" hints its purpose in its name. It aims to furnish fortnightly a transfigured tract,—transfigured by being paid for, and by representing not so much a given system of beliefs as the emphasis, in somewhat varying beliefs, on "Freedom, Fellowship and Character in Religion;" this tract to be taken from the rack or table at the church-door to the home, there to serve its little mission by reading in the family, lending to a neighbor, mailing to a distant friend, etc. We hope the plan may be destined to wide adoption by Liberal churches as part of their regular church-work.

The word "UNITY" in the title bears to the Committee who arrange the series a wide meaning, pointing more to the substance, than to the forms, of religious thought and faith; and in inviting contributions they have sought, not only through the whole range, but in both directions beyond the range, of those who bear the "Unitarian" name,—though most of the writers must naturally be found within that name. "New Orthodoxy," "New Judaism," those who care for no name but "Religion," and the "Ethical Societies," will all be represented. The choice of subject is left to the writers; and *each writer is responsible for his own utterance alone, and for nothing else in the series.* "One of your best—a life-helping sermon, or a thought-sermon reaching the life," was the invitation sent out.

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